IN such foolish trifles right orthography and true pronunciation are very often unregarded, and are the cause of an abuse which often impedes good minds in writing as they ought.

AMong all those who ever conceived or made ciphers of letters, he who first made his of an S was the most proficient in French—at least, if he intended the application, and I believe that he did, inasmuch as he did not make it of an Attic S, or a Greek, but of a French letter, called *lettre de forme,* in which the S is thick, and aptly used in the signification of *largesse,* in the following shape.

DEvices which are not made by significant letters are made of pictures which indicate the conceit of the author, and these are called rebuses, whereon one has meditated and caused others to meditate.* Such pictures are either men, or women, beasts, birds, fishes, or other things, living or not, whereof I deem a rebus in four verses in French to be very well conceived, for all the words in the four verses aforesaid are represented in divers pictures, & we read, in substance, this:—

> On me tient fol, faisant folle folye.
> Ainsi ie vis, puis ainsi ie folye.
> Fol entre folz, coquard entre mains vis,[49]
> On me maintient, car follement ie vis.

ALSO, the rebus of the three dead men and three living is very well conceived. I find that there are Latin words which are drawn and to be read in pictures and in French words,† as *Habe mortem præ oculis,* and *Non habebat mortem ante oculos;* so, too, *Cras habebo te.* I know one in Greek that is very good, and of letters only; but they stand for common Italian words; they are M.Φ.Δ.M.Λ, which means in Italian: *Mi fidelta mi lauda.* In French the meaning is clear, but the French words do not agree with the letters nor with the Italian, for we say: *Ma fidelite me loue.* That one of the diamond is good; and that in which the meaning is: *Iay mis mon estat au derriere,* is not bad, since it is represented by a *Gay*‡ and a *Mymonet;* that is to say, translated from Picard into French: *dun Singe qui taste de sa main a son derriere.* Also that which

* '*Cela est appelle ung Resbuz, au quel on a resue, et faict on resuer les autres.*' *The play upon words can hardly be reproduced in translation.*

† '*Qui se font et pronuncent en Images et vocables francois.*'

‡ *Picard for Jay.*

says, *A Besanson sept femmes a,* is very ingenious, of which I forbear in this place to give the meaning.

I Could quote many others and thereof make a whole book; but I will pass on now, and make room for the jesters and young lovers, who gladly amuse themselves with such dainty trifles, which, be it said, do not come into their minds without inspiration from above. Whereof the ancient philosophers often held discourse & the poets sang, among whom Ovid, at the beginning of the sixth book of his *Fasti,* said for them and for the poets:—

> Est Deus in nobis, agitante calescimis illo,
> Impetus hic sacræ semina mentis habet.*

That is to say, 'We poets and fantastics have within ourselves a divine inspiration, which excites us to merry conceits, and to execute them gracefully.'

THIS manner of conception, that is, of writing done by pictures, was originally invented by the Egyptians, who had all their ceremonies written down in this fashion, to the end that the common herd & the ignorant should not be able to understand or easily to learn their secrets & mysteries. These writings were called in Greek *Hieroglyphica,* that is to say, *sacra scripta,* sacred writings, which no one could understand without being a great philosopher, and one who could grasp the meaning and qualities of natural things. When they wished to represent the year, they drew in portraiture or painting a dragon gnawing his tail; to represent liberality, they made the right hand open, and for niggardliness the hand closed. They represented a thousand other like excellent things by pictures, as you can read & learn in the twenty-fifth chapter of the ancient lessons of Cælius Rhodiginus† and more fully in Orus Apollo,[50] who has set them down in a volume which you can find in Greek, if you will, and in Latin also, and which I have translated into French, and made a present thereof to a noble lord & good friend of mine.

INasmuch as I have descended to the subject of Devices, Rebuses, & Hieroglyphic writings, I propose here to set forth my own device and mark, because I find many persons desiring to understand it.

FIrst, there is an antique jar, which is broken, and through which is thrust a drill.‡ This broken jar (*pot cassé*) signifies our body, which is an earthen jar. The drill signifies Fate, which pierces and passes

* *Fasti,* VI, 5. *The true text is 'calescimus.'*

† *Lectionum Antiquarum,* XVI, 25.

‡ '*Toret.*' *Manifestly a play upon the author's name.*